

**Town of Groton
Invasive Species Committee
18 August 2025
Meeting Minutes**



Committee Members Present:

Charlotte Weigel
Jonathan Basch
Olin Lathrop
Adam Burnett
Ron Strohsahl
Ben Wolfe

Committee Members Not Present:

Ann Carpenter
Brian Bettencourt

Agenda:

1. Review minutes and action items from July meeting
 2. Debrief on recent treatments
 3. Schedule for upcoming treatments
 4. Coordination with DPW on Town Right of Ways
 5. Proposal for porcelain-berry brochure
 6. Update on MDAR Spotted Lanternfly quarterly meeting
 7. All other business
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The Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

1. The first order of business was: Review minutes and action items from the July meeting

a. Minutes:

i. Minutes amended for accuracy

1. Olin Lathrop moved to approve the minutes as amended
2. Ben Wolfe seconded the motion
3. The motion passed by roll call vote (5 aye, 0 nay, 1 abstain)
 - a. Abstains: Charlotte Weigel

b. Action Items:

i. Assigned Previously:

1. **Charlotte Weigel** to find latitude/longitude of Japanese barberry stand in Sawtell Conservation Area (Parcel 232-9) and Torrey Woods (Parcel 231-94)
 - a. pending
2. **Jonathan Basch** to create 20 laminated color copies of native and invasive plant information to be used during educational events
 - a. Pending; examples printed but need to make final decision and finalize copy

ACTION ITEM: Ann Carpenter and Jonathan Basch to meet to finalize version and laminate copies

3. **Ann Carpenter & Jonathan Basch** to coordinate and restock brochures in Prescott Center
 - a. completed
4. **All members:** get sworn in at Town Hall as soon as possible
 - a. completed

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5. **Jonathan Basch** to send coordinates of new Japanese knotweed location near Surrenden Farms to Ron Strohsahl for mapping in ArcGIS
 - a. completed

ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to add points to map

6. **Brian Bettencourt** to contact property owner for access and location of Japanese knotweed at West Street
 - a. completed
7. **Jonathan Basch** to contact town to find DPW contacts regarding treatments in town rights-of-way
 - a. completed
8. **Brian Bettencourt** to contact URI to ask if Groton can be a volunteer test site for Japanese knotweed biocontrol release
 - a. completed
9. **Ron Strohsahl** to send copy of Town of Stow Japanese knotweed treatment permit to Committee for review
 - a. completed
10. **Olin Lathrop** to recirculate homeowner protocol for treating Japanese knotweed for review by committee
 - a. completed

2. The second order of business was: Debrief on recent treatments
 - a. GELD Property
 - i. Second treatment application of 2025 completed in early August
 - ii. Foliar treatment with triclopyr
 - iii. Jonathan Basch reviewed property earlier this week and appeared effective

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to let GELD know we have completed additional work in 2025

3. The third order of business was: Schedule for upcoming treatments
 - a. Nod Road - Petapawag
 - i. Triclopyr foliar treatment proposed
 - b. Second 2025 treatment at Surrenden Farms
 - i. Triclopyr foliar treatment on Japanese knotweed as it begins blooming

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to coordinate treatment of Surrenden Farms for August 30-31

- c. Groton Country Club
 - i. Japanese knotweed returning along slope hillside
 - ii. Roundup Custom foliar treatment proposed
 - iii. Adam Burnett & Olin Lathrop discuss designing a longer applicator for reaching further down hillside upgradient of the wetlands

ACTION ITEM: Adam Burnett will attempt creating extended applicator for backpack sprayer to reach over knotweed

- d. Olivia Way
 - i. Told homeowner late August - first week of September for initial treatment of Asiatic bittersweet
 1. Propose treatment for Labor Day weekend

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to contact the Olivia Way homeowner and schedule treatment

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ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to send the homeowner's contact information to Jonathan Basch

- e. *Phragmites* treatments in September
 - i. Priest - Olin Lathrop will treat this fall
 - ii. Rail Trail - Olin Lathrop will treat this fall
 - iii. Eliades - Olin Lathrop will treat this fall
 - iv. Prefer to do treatment after Labor Day
- f. Japanese stiltgrass
 - i. Along west side of rail trail
 - 1. DCR and state-owned property
 - ii. Groton Town Forest parking area
 - iii. Plan for upcoming weekend (8/23-24)

ACTION ITEM: Charlotte Weigel to schedule Japanese stiltgrass removal event at Groton Town Forest

- 4. The fourth order of business was: Coordination with DPW on town rights-of-way
 - a. Jonathan Basch contacted DPW and received response regarding West Street, and Townsend Road, and Japanese knotweed along town roads
 - i. Charlotte Steeves, Groton Conservation Agent, was copied on email
 - ii. Use of herbicide in town rights of way DPW needs an approved Vegetation Management Plan (VMP)
 - 1. Town DPW does not have VMP and do not have interest in generating a VMP
 - 2. VMP is a state requirement and needs approval from DEP for use of herbicides along road
 - iii. Committee discusses assisting DPW with creation of VMP
 - 1. MA DEP has September 1st due date and comment period for prior to approval

ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to send MA DEP website with VMP and Regulations

ACTION ITEM: All members review VMP examples for future review

- 5. The fifth order of business was: Proposal for porcelain-berry brochure
 - a. Ben Wolfe has been documenting growth with photographs throughout the year
 - b. Ben Wolfe brought samples of both grape and porcelain-berry for a side-by-side comparison

ACTION ITEM: Ben Wolfe to write article for the Groton Herald to educate the public while porcelain-berry berries are visible

- 6. The sixth order of business was: Update on MDAR Spotted Lanternfly quarterly meeting
 - a. Adam Burnett: 40 towns in MA, 9 additional in 2025
 - b. Adam Burnett: the best prevention is to remove the main host plants in Groton - tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- 7. The seventh order of business was: all other business
 - a. Town of Stow Japanese knotweed application permit
 - i. Olin Lathrop: called Kathy Sferra (Town of Stow Conservation Agent) for additional information
 - 1. DEP reluctantly agreed originally, but not promoting the permit in future
 - 2. Only 4 applicants applied for the permit and were approved

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3. Does not seem like a worthwhile endeavor to encourage Groton Conservation Commission to follow
- b. Japanese knotweed homeowner guide
 - i. Ben Wolfe: add photographs so that homeowner can confirm it is Japanese knotweed
 - ii. Jonathan Basch: should we add disclaimers to release Committee from liability?
 1. Provide instructions to read and follow all directions/labels
 - iii. Adam Burnett: insert section regarding treatments near wetlands
 - iv. Will return at next meeting for review
- c. Wild and Scenic Invasive Species Regional Coordinator position
 - i. Budget from Wild and Scenic Council has been approved
 - ii. Marisa Browning-Kamins (NRWA) willing to attend upcoming meeting
 1. request if she is available for September 22nd tentative meeting

ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to contact Marisa to ask if she would be willing to attend Sept. 22 meeting and discuss position

- iii. Committee is most interested in crowdsourcing a regional map, and efforts to control Japanese knotweed along Nashua River
- d. Adam Burnett notices MA DEP required Town of Groton DPW to brushhog/flail mow Japanese knotweed and large area of vegetation and shrubs on Nod Road dump all the way to Nod Brook
 - i. Japanese knotweed population has spread throughout the area within the buffer zone to wetlands and within the Riverfront Area

8. Meeting Adjournment

- a. Olin Lathrop moved to adjourn
- b. Charlotte Weigel seconded
- c. The motion to adjourn approved by unanimous roll call vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

OLD ACTION ITEMS + NEW:

1. **Charlotte Weigel** to find latitude/longitude of Japanese barberry stand in Sawtell Conservation Area (Parcel 232-9) and Torrey Woods (Parcel 231-94)
2. **Jonathan Basch** to create 20 laminated color copies of native and invasive plant information to be used during educational events
 - a. **Ann Carpenter and Jonathan Basch to meet to finalize version and laminate copies**
3. **Jonathan Basch** to let GELD know we have completed additional work in 2025
4. **Jonathan Basch** to coordinate treatment of Surrenden Farms for August 30-31
5. **Adam Burnett** will attempt creating extended applicator for backpack sprayer to reach over knotweed
6. **Jonathan Basch** to contact Olivia Way homeowner and schedule treatment
7. **Olin Lathrop** to send the Olivia Way homeowner's contact information to Jonathan Basch
8. **Charlotte Weigel** to schedule Japanese stiltgrass removal event at Groton Town Forest
9. **Ron Strohsahl** to send MA DEP website with VMP and Regulations
 - a. **All members** review VMP examples for future review

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Massachusetts

10. **Ben Wolfe** to write article for the Groton Herald to educate the public while porcelain-berry berries are visible
11. **Ron Strohsahl** to contact Marisa Browning-Kamins to ask if she would be willing to attend Sept. 22 meeting and discuss updates to the Invasive Species Coordinator position